

# **TILEYARD EDUCATION**

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[MUSIC BUSINESS]

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**CREATIVE MUSIC MANAGEMENT – BMTY7000**

**REFLECTIVE SUMARRY**

Discipline Tutor: Harry Leckstein

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## A)

For the Term 1 Creative Music Management group task I decided to build a group with my three classmates Adrienne, Chasney and Karl. After Chasney reported that he is the creator and manager of the London based independent Hip Hop label Club FRSHRZ, that is currently planning the debut release of the all-female Hip Hop group Queens Edition, the group decided to create an all-encompassing release plan and strategy for their debut single and remixes. Before our first meeting, Chasney provided us with all information he had on the artists and the song so we could all individually prepare notes about what we thought would be beneficial to the campaign.

During our first group meeting, we created a long list of all of the individual elements that need to be taken care of in order to create a successful release campaign. These include:

- Songwriting
- Recording (Single and Remixes)
- Mixing
- Mastering
- Distribution
- Photo shootings
- Video shootings
- General organization
- Registration at the Performing Right Society (PRS) for music, (PPL) and the Mechanical (MCPS)
- Transport to rehearsals, etc.
- Social media strategy
- Paid social media ads
- Tour Management
- Public Relations (PR) - Radio, Tv, Magazines
- Merchandise
- Budgeting and Finance
- Brand Sponsorship
- Applications to receive grants

After understanding all the tasks that need to be taken care of, we established everyone's strengths and weaknesses as well as topics of interest. Fortunately, each of the four member's had different strong suits which made the distribution of tasks very easy. After creating four job titles we assigned tasks evenly to these roles to ensure that each member would have to deal with a similar workload. Chasney was assigned as Artist Manager, Adrienne was assigned as Finance Manager, Karl took on the role as PR Manager and I decided to function as the Digital Marketing Manager.

A special interest of mine is analyzing and developing marketing and PR strategies for artists. I understand how important a well thought out and individualized campaign is, whether it be on social media, digital advertisement or playlist placement. The potential of creating strategies based on in depth research excites me. However, Hip Hop is not a genre I am very experienced with. While I do

enjoy listening to the genre and am very open minded, I am more familiar with marketing concepts behind genres such as Indie Pop or Folk. Working with this song and creating a fitting strategy has therefore been a challenge for me. Researching and learning about the ways that Hip Hop is promoted has not just been a challenge though, but an opportunity for me to broaden my horizon and discover and understand the ways of a style of music that I have not been very familiar with.

Contrary to the genre, I could resonate very well with Queens Edition's message of female empowerment. I am very passionate about gender equality myself and found it very inspiring to create a strategy based this core value.

As Digital Marketing Manager my tasks were to create a fitting social media strategy, create the artwork for the release, create an Electronic Press Kit (EPK), deal with paid social media ads, establish brand partnerships and pitch the single to playlist curators and blogs.

During our first meeting we created a Google Doc that all four members received access too. This enabled us to share ideas and things we worked on individually with the group. This was also important to share any costs that arose with our Finance Manager Adrienne.

After our first meeting, I started my tasks by doing broad research on the genre, song, message as well as how to create social media strategies and advertisement, how to pitch to playlist curators, how to create an EPK and other. My aim was to establish a clear vision of what I would like to create before starting to work on the individual elements. My next step was to start creating the artwork, so I could receive feedback from my group members at our next meeting. Since I am not very familiar with photo editing and graphic design software, I asked a friend of mine who is very trained in photoshop to help me create the banners. He agreed to help me out for free which an amazing aid. Together we created four different versions which I then presented at our second group meeting.

Unfortunately, prior to our second meeting, Karl, our PR Manager, had to drop out of the project due to personal reasons. As we had already distributed tasks evenly and were deep into our own projects, this message was a bit unsettling as this happened during the winter holidays and there was no more time to find another fourth member. Some of the tasks had to be redistributed but most of the PR tasks were dropped which made the digital marketing campaign even more important.

We decided to move one as a team of three and met up a second time to discuss everyone's current status. Besides Karl's leaving all the other tasks seemed to be going in right order. I also used this occasion to receive feedback on the artwork which I then tried to put into action at my next session with my friend.

Over the next few weeks, leading up to the deadline, communication between the group members mostly consisted of asking feedback via Google Docs as everyone was busy working on their own tasks. Especially during this time of individual work, I understood the importance of all members working towards the same goal and pulling on the same string.

Shortly before the deadline we met up one last time to present all final parts of the group assignment and to do small, last minute adjustments.

I believe that, despite the challenges of working within a genre that I was not very familiar with prior to this project and, despite losing a team member half way through the execution stage, we managed to

create a successful and engaging release campaign for the debut single of Queens Edition. Building on everyone's strengths and distributing tasks accordingly has proven to be a successful team working strategy. Furthermore, everyone's opinions were heard and fair feedback was given without the dismissal of any ideas. I consider our team work successful and I will take this experience with me into future team working tasks.

## **B)**

Digital technologies have an immense impact on all aspects of original popular music creation and promotion as well as the teamwork involved. There are countless tools from websites to software that can simplify all kinds of processes. This ranges from software like Ableton Live or Logic, which enable anyone to produce, record, mix and master music over platforms like Auddly that aid songwriters to share lyrics, audio and other files and establish percentages and rights. In this reflection however, I will analyze tools that I used during this team task and tools that might be useful for future team assessments.

To communicate as a team, we only made use of two programs, WhatsApp for general messages that required quick responses and Google Documents to provide a mutual space to share more complex topics regarding the content of the group work. Google Doc works like a Word Document that allows all members to view, add and edit content. The program is free of charge. (Google, 2020) Google Doc is not just useful for individual members to share their progress with the group. It can also be used to create a shared document during a group session and then allow everyone access to see the file as a summary of the session. The program has aided us a lot as it is simple to use and free and I will definitely be using Google Docs again.

WhatsApp is an easy to use, free messenger app that only requires the user to have a mobile number and internet. As the vast majority of people uses WhatsApp for their casual conversations, it is convenient to use this provider for group tasks as well. WhatsApp enables individual as well as group chats.

Besides platforms that aided the group's team work, I made use of several other digital technologies to create the digital campaign.

Social media is extremely beneficial for promotional purposes of popular music. As digital marketing manager, a big part of my strategy revolved around social media - in particular Instagram. But, making an impression on Instagram calls for external help from other platforms.

One of these platforms is Hootsuite, a service that aids with keeping track of social media profiles, provides detailed statistics of the followers and post engagement and as well as paid social media. (Hootsuite, 2020) Furthermore, it enables the user to schedule posts in advance which can help keep posts consistent. Using a platform like Hootsuite gave the team a fantastic opportunity to gather an overview of the amount of content needed to support a digital campaign on social media. Having such an overview is essential for managing a social media presence.

"As Instagram is an image-based social platform", in order to achieve great reach, the content shared on the platform needs to be eye-catching and engaging. (Spooner, 2017) In our day and age the amount of

information that roams around the internet is vast which could be seen as a potential threat for a new project such as Queens Edition. Hence, why I introduced the idea of creating artwork for BLXCK Pride, in order to achieve a look, that showcases a clear point of interest. (Spooner, 2017) I have taken the decision of refraining from using mobile apps for the editing the photos, which are at times very limiting and instead used Adobe Photoshop to re-touch the existing artwork. Adobe Photoshop opens up a very wide range of options when it comes visual designing and it can really bring balance between a good vision and the tools to turn imagination into reality. (Business Matters, 2019)

Because Instagram solely works as an image/video presentational platform, I had a look at developing an EPK website for the band as well. The EPK has the role of representing the project from a brand's perspective. I gathered the necessary elements for creating an Electronic Press Kit, which, with the help of Bandzoogle, was made into part of the webpage. I believe it is very important for a new project to have a space where the message and the history of the band are placed alongside press pictures and artworks, which could ultimately reflect on how the music is perceived. (Bandzoogle, 2020)

Having a website is a good step towards contouring the band's story, but without direct external feedback, the credibility of the act could be perceived as fragile. That is why we planned on pursuing blogs and online magazines to listen to the new single and read the band's story, with the potential of featuring Queens Edition on their platforms. In my search of contacts for blogs, I learned about Submithub, a paid platform where artists can upload their music to be reviewed by diverse music curators for blogs, music online magazines and even Spotify playlists. (Submithub, 2020)

## c)

After assessing the group's, as well as my personal results, I decided to create a S.W.O.T analysis in order to gain a better understanding of what I have succeeded in doing and what I can improve for my future projects. (see Appendix 1)

Having a strong sense of vision makes for a good digital marketing manager. I believe, that I have adapted quickly to the challenge of mapping the next steps that Queens Edition has to take, in order to establish itself as a new, fresh artist within the industry. I shall continue my practice of doing in depth research within the music industry – a practice which helped me achieve results for this project.

Even though our organization has been quite good, it can always be improved. I looked into websites that could provide a faster way of sending and receiving important resources and I came across the application Slack. Essentially, this program replaces the need of using Email. It functions like an open inbox where all team members have a chance to understand what the big picture is instead of being reduced to their private email inboxes with no exact perspective of the overall strategy. All of the messages containing resources, which would normally be sent via email, can be sent on the Slack chat where everyone can have access to them. Making it easier to keep track of what everyone is doing and on how parts of the plan are being tackled by each team member. My favorite part about this app is the compartmentation. As a project manager you can assign roles and create groups for different tasks, making it easier for everyone to understand exactly what needs to be done. The app is also completely free to use and it works well both on a phone and on a computer. (Slack, 2020)

There is an opportunity for me to work again in this role and I believe that the experience gained in these projects could enable me to apply for jobs in the industry as a digital marketing consultant.

Overall, I believe that I have succeeded in my role for this project and have managed to secure the goals we set in the beginning of this task. I also believe, that by continuing to use my creativity in close relation to my critical thinking. I will be able to create a portfolio of projects and strategies which will help me with my career as an industry professional.

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## Appendix:

### 1. S.W.O.T Analysis on my role as Digital Marketing Manager:

|                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>STRENGTHS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good strategy planning</li><li>• Good vision</li></ul>                                                         | <b>WEAKNESSES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inexperience in the genre</li><li>• Loss of team member</li></ul>        |
| <b>OPPORTUNITIES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working within this role for a bigger project</li><li>• Making a Career out of Digital Marketing</li></ul> | <b>THREATS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failing to meet deadlines leading to showcasing unprofessionalism</li></ul> |

